



## John W. Lovato Sr.

July 10, 1942 - April 15, 2026

CRYSTAL FALLS - John W. Lovato, Sr., 83, of Iron Mountain, passed away on Wednesday, April 15, 2026 at the Iron County Medical Care Facility in Crystal Falls surrounded by his loving family.

John was born on July 10, 1942, in Chicago, Illinois, son of the late William and Theodora (Cazzola) Lovato. He graduated from Norway High School in 1961 and attended Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Michigan, where he played football. A talented athlete in both high school and college, John earned the nickname “Long Gone Lovato” for his remarkable speed on the field.

On September 14, 1968, John married the love of his life, Darlene Wright, in Norway, Michigan. They shared 57 beautiful years together.

For most of his career, John worked in construction with various companies. After retiring from the industry, he drove truck for Zeeb Trucking in Kingsford, Michigan.

An avid outdoorsman, John cherished every moment spent at camp—hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, and exploring the trails on his side-by-side. His infectious laugh and warm smile could light up any room, and his kind, genuine spirit touched everyone who knew him. He was, simply put, a good man who will be deeply missed.

John is survived by his wife of 57 years, Darlene; his son, John Jr. (Wendy) Lovato of Crystal Falls; his daughter, Tammy (Roger) Hendrickson of Crystal

Falls; his sister, Linda (Paul) Monette of Stephenson; grandchildren, Tyler (Skylah) Lovato of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, Kelsi Hendrickson (Marco Luna) of Grand Rapids, Michigan, Amber (Jake) Denell of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and Riley Hendrickson (Taylor Honkala) of Crystal Falls; great-granddaughter Clarke Ann Denell; and several nieces and nephews.

Along with his parents, he was also preceded in death by his mother- and father-in-law, Tom and Pat Wright; his brother, Ed Lovato; brothers-in-law, Tom Jr. and Donald Wright; infant sister-in-law, Betty Jean Wright; his special friend Leno St. Juliana; and his beloved dog, Bojo.

Private family services will be held at a later date.

Condolences may be expressed to the family online at [www.nashfuneralhome.net](http://www.nashfuneralhome.net).

The Nash Funeral Home of Crystal Falls has been entrusted with the arrangements.

# Tribute Wall

DP

“ I’m so sorry to hear of John’s passing. He was a great classmate and always so much fun! It was a joy watching his speed on our great Norway Vikings football team! He had a wonderful spirit about him and everyone just smiled when he was around. Rest in peace, John. My deepest sympathy to you, Darlene, and to all of John’s family. May God’s Peace surround you. Darlene Peebles, Classmate



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**Darlene Peebles** - April 21 at 08:14 PM

ST

“ We are so sorry to hear of Johnny passing. I use to spend a couple of weeks in the summer at my Aunt Dora's and Uncle Willi. Always had lots of fun with my cousins so I knew Johnny when he was younger. Sharon ( Cazzola ) Tipton

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**sharon Cazzola Tipton** - April 21 at 11:49 AM

JG

“ We moved to Norway when I was freshman in Sept.....I decided to see Norway High school play a football game...I saw this rather small, but very fast guy running with the football for a touchdown...That was Long Gone Johnny Lovato... We got to be good friends later....he always had a wonderful smile and enjoyed life....We hunted rabbits a few times..Every winter coach Ronberg would take us kids from the Conservation Club to hunt rabbits...then the next day would cook a rabbit spaghetti diner....( had bunks to stay overnight...John and I went out in the deep snow hunting. A snowstorm came in while we deep in the woods (swamp maybe) We got lost but found an old road and made it back...everyone thought it was funny....Johnny and I were a little worried and wanted to get back before dark....he stayed positive and we did...still telling stories or talking about sports....I only saw him a few times in later years....at class reunions...always a fun person..I miss him like you do...God Bless, John.....Joe Giannunzio...classmate

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**Joe Giannunzio** - April 20 at 12:18 AM

AC

“ To have a neighbor, classmate and friend like Johnny was a blessing. Only time he didn't smile was when he was running for touchdowns -- all business!  
Albert Carlotto

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**Al Carlotto** - April 19 at 06:06 PM

RH

“ 4 files added to the tribute wall



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**Roger Hendrickson** - April 18 at 03:39 PM